

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Definition: Collective Impact is a community organizing model. It differs from other collaborations or coordination efforts. Beyond coordination or collaboration, collective impact is achieved when a group of important stakeholders from different sectors come together *to solve a significant problem and achieve a specific outcome*. It is a systematic approach that focuses on the relationship between organizations and progress toward shared objectives.

Key Elements: Collective Impact is built on the premise that change occurs through the following five key elements:

1. *Common Agenda:* The agenda reflects a shared vision for change, a common understanding of the problem, joint approach for solving the problem through agreed upon actions.
2. *Shared Measurement:* There is common agreement of the ways success will be measured, consistent measures of results on a short list of indicators across all participating organizations.
3. *Mutually Reinforcing Activities:* Each participant undertakes a specific set of activities at which it excels; these activities support are coordinated with the others.
4. *Continuous Communication:* A common vocabulary is necessary; regular meetings over time require the attendance of the top or CEO or the organizations. Communication is required to develop shared measurement.
5. *Backbone Support Organization (BSO):* Separate from the participating organizations, the BSO takes on the role of project manager, data manager and facilitator. The BSO keeps the focus on the desired outcome, and provides the mechanism for effective decision making, and as such, conveys appropriate pressure to keep moving toward the goal and mediates conflict among stakeholders.

Collective Impact is not a quick fix. Results are achieved over time and with the sustained commitment of the stakeholders.

The Collective Impact approach may be an applicable tactic for First Things First to achieve selected system building outcomes. For example, Collective Impact may be a mechanism to address the long-standing issues related to early identification and early intervention for children with or at risk of developmental delays.

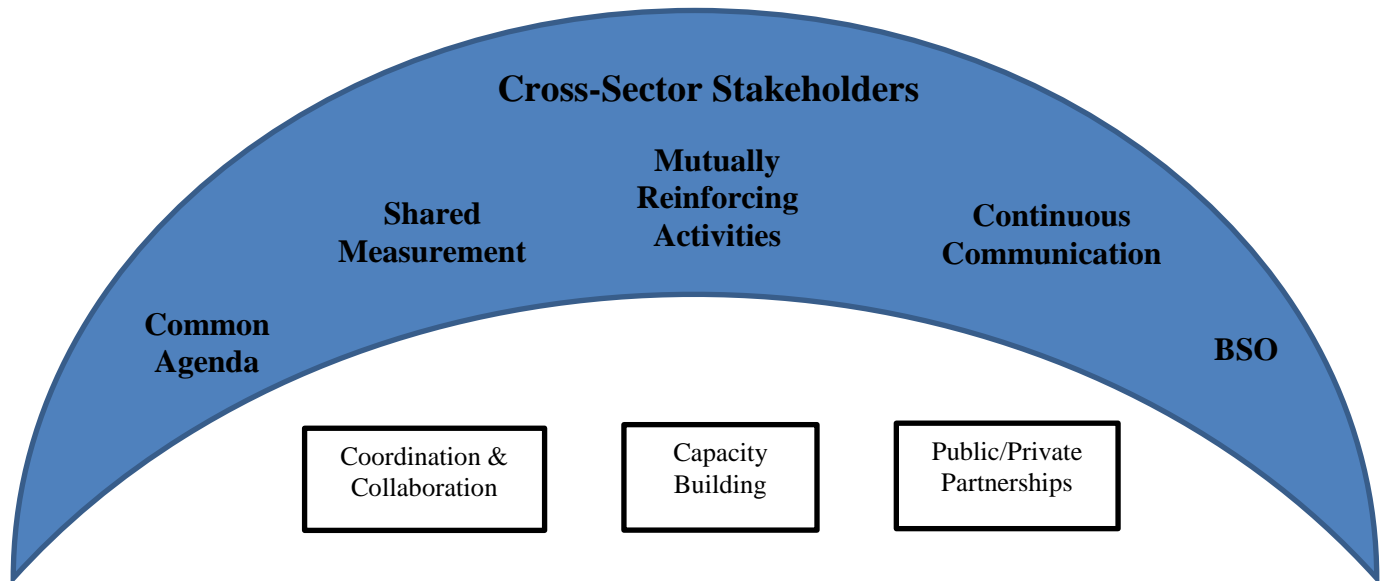
Considerations: Funding to support a Backbone Support Organization (BSO) requires an investment and commitment of most or all stakeholders as well as agreement to work within the structure developed by the BSO. As noted above, behavior change of key organization is also a

Strategic Initiatives Unit Brief

requirement. The advantage of Collective Impact is the sustained effort and commitment of key stakeholders over time until the desired outcome is achieved.

Collective Impact may also be a strategic approach that could assist Regional Partnership Councils to achieve system-building goals at the Regional level. Again, the approach requires key partners to adhere to all Key Elements and a commitment of resources to sustain the process.

In many respects, FTF Strategic Goals are compatible with Collective Impact. Collective Impact could be an overarching way to frame coordination & collaboration, capacity building, and public private partnerships; and to address specific initiatives (see graphic, below).

A Potential Framework for Implementing a Collective Impact Approach at FTF**Example Potential Initiatives to Advance with a Collective Impact Approach**

- Developmental Screening System
- Communities of Practice/Learning Communities
- Professional Development System/Coaching System
- Oral Health
- Birth-Five Children in Court System

Resources:

http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/collective_impact/

<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/03/07/coming-together-to-give-schools-a-boost/>

<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/03/10/the-power-of-partnerships/>